

It is a commitment to becoming less dependent on oil, and it's a commitment to be better stewards of the environment.

In my budget, Mr. President, I proposed to Congress that we invest \$1.6 billion over 10 years on additional research to make sure that we can have alternative fuel stocks to make ethanol. Just so you know, in the last years—so long as I've been the President, we spent about \$12 billion on new technologies that will enable us to achieve economic independence, as well as be better stewards of the environment.

There's a lot we can do together. I appreciate so very much the idea of Brazil and America sharing research and development opportunities. You've got great scientists; we've got great scientists—it makes sense for us to collaborate for the good of mankind. And part of our initiative is that we are going to work together efficiently and to cooperate on research and development.

I also think the President's idea of helping others realize the benefits of alternative fuels makes a lot of sense. And so we applaud the Inter-America Development Bank, its efforts to try to get loans and capital into countries that could benefit from alternative sources of energy. I'm particularly anxious to work with the President on helping Central America become less dependent on oil, become energy self-sufficient. It's in the interest of the United States that there be a prosperous neighborhood. And one way to help spread prosperity in Central America is for them to become energy producers, not become—not remain dependent on others for their energy sources.

And finally, the President mentioned the fact that at the United Nations, there was a International Biofuels Forum. What he didn't tell you; it was his idea. And I applaud the fact, Mr. President, that you put that idea out. It makes a lot of sense for countries like China and India to understand the potentials of alternative sources of energy. And I believe that Brazil and the United States has got the capacity to help lead the way toward that better day.

So, Mr. President, it has been a great first meeting here. I appreciate the fact that you're about to buy me lunch. I'm kind of

hungry. [*Laughter*] Looking forward to eating some of that good Brazilian food.

But in the meantime, I hope the citizens of Brazil, like the citizens of the United States, are as optimistic about the future as these two Presidents are. And one reason we're optimistic is because we see the bright and real potential for our citizens being able to use alternative sources of energy that will promote the common good.

So, Mr. President, thank you for having me.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:22 a.m. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **The President's News Conference With President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil in Sao Paulo**

*March 9, 2007*

**President Lula da Silva.** There's more journalists here than at the Oscar—[*laughter*]*—although the artists aren't quite as good looking as the ones that get Oscars.*

Your Excellency, Mr. George Bush, President of the United States of America; the members of the North American and Brazilian delegations; Governor of Sao Paulo, Jose Serra; our dear president of Petrobras, Mr. Gabrielli; ministers; journalists; my friends; ladies and gentlemen:

This second visit by President Bush to Brazil in little more than one year is another step in intensifying dialog between our Governments and our countries. This is a dialog which began even before I took office, when President Bush received me in a visit in December 2002 at the White House. During the frequent meetings and phone calls we have had since then, our relations have always been characterized by extreme frankness, mutual respect, and a constructive spirit.

Our societies are multiethnic. Many cultures and ideas live together within them. They were founded on the principles of pluralism, tolerance, and respect for diversity. The fact that our Governments respect each

other, mutually, explains the excellent moment that relations between Brazil and the United States are going through. It also reveals the great potential for cooperation between our countries, if we are able to continue building common objectives.

This has been the basis of the conversations we held today, when we went over our broad bilateral agenda and evaluated how we could best work on regional and multilateral issues. The relationship between Brazil and the U.S. historically has gone beyond individual governments at the head of either of our countries. One proof of this is the broad range of relations amongst business leaders, representatives of civil society, and the citizens of our two countries.

The United States are our largest individual trade partner and the largest investor in Brazil. During my first mandates in Government, trade between our countries increased over 50 percent; U.S. investments in Brazil doubled over the past decade. Brazilian companies are more and more active inside the U.S. economy. They are, alongside the major Brazilian community that lives there, are contributing to generate jobs and income in that country.

Ladies and gentlemen, Brazil is proud of having contributed to the decision by the U.S. Government to increase the share of biofuels in its energy mix. I recall the enthusiasm with which President Bush was first exposed in the meeting we had in Brasilia in 2005 to Brazil's success story in terms of biofuel.

Here in Brazil, we have an extremely successful program, considered a model, which came out of the investment of over 30 years in research and development. It's a program which brings together respect for the environment with the preservation and intensification of the food security of our society. It's a program which has a major social impact because of its capacity to generate jobs, to strengthen family farming, and to distribute income.

This is a field where our two countries can cooperate. The memorandum of understanding on biofuels, which our ministers signed today, is a decisive step in that direction. Bringing together their efforts, the U.S.

and Brazil can further push the democratization of energy and bring biofuels to all.

One of the most complex tasks that we face will be to assure access to major consuming centers. Brazil hopes that the ethanol market will be benefited by free trade, free of protectionism. That is the only way that the fuel of the future will be able to promote sustainable development. It also benefit poor and developing countries, by making trade a factor of prosperity for all. This will be a challenge about which I spoke at length with President Bush. We need to eliminate imbalances that still constrain world trade and that aggravate the asymmetries of today's world.

I expressed to the President my feeling that we are closer than ever to a successful conclusion of the negotiations of the Doha round. All should come out winning, with an ambitious and balanced agreement, especially the poorest countries. More opportunities for growth and for development would be created in the poorest regions of the world. International trade in agriculture would increase, thereby reducing poverty, generating jobs and income in the least favored countries and regions.

That is why I repeated to President Bush my willingness to participate in a meeting in any part of the world to bringing together leaders if this can help us overcome the final difficulties between us and a truly historic agreement.

My dear Mr. President, your visit to Brazil coincides with an exceptional moment that our continent is going through, particularly South America. The dictatorships which our region suffered from for two decades are no more than a painful memory of the past. All South American Governments have arisen from free elections with broad, popular participation. All of them are working in projects for growth with income distribution, capable of putting an end to terrible social inequalities that we have inherited and which has been aggravated by macroeconomic adventures in the past. We are all finally involved in a project for South American integration.

The countries in our region have associated their destiny with that of the MERCOSUR and that of the South American Community of Nations. We know that integration is the best pathway to strengthen

democracy and to achieve regional prosperity. It creates wealth and promotes development. It guarantees a more sovereign presence of our region in the world. Our integration is taking place amongst independent nations, where diversity and tolerance are also factors of strength.

We respect the political and economic options of each country. This has allowed us to make notable advances: expanding trade, carrying out infrastructure works, strengthening our energy security, the well-being of our societies, and bringing closer together peoples that will be able to move down their own roads. Integration also opens the way for investments from outside the region in the area of infrastructure and will have a multiplying effect on our economies, dynamizing all forms of exchange.

Mr. President, redemocratization and the conquering of political freedom were not enough to keep millions of Brazilians and Latin Americans out of a situation of extreme poverty. That is why all governments in our region have implemented programs to develop our countries and to fight social exclusion. We, the Presidents, must think about the lives of those people who suffer the most and who, in addition to having democracy to elect their rulers, also have the right to health, to education, to housing, to public safety, to bring up their children as citizens. We all know that political democracy prospers when we have economic and social development, when we eradicate poverty, when we fight exclusion and social inequities.

That is why, my dear President Bush, your visit to Brazil—second visit in such a short time—opens the possibility for the U.S. and Brazilian peoples, and I believe all Latin American peoples, to have the prospect that we are not far away from being able to build a new standard of relations amongst nations, to be able to discuss freely and sovereignty about how rich countries can help poorer countries to develop, and more important than all of that, to assure that democracy will be the reason why the benefits of wealth, the building of wealth itself, and the social benefits that the people need, can fully justify the hard fight to win democracy in our continent.

President Bush, I would like to conclude by saying to you that Brazil is aware of the

meaning of the integration of South America; Brazil is aware of the meaning of the integration of Latin America, just as Brazil is aware of the meaning coming closer—of Brazil coming closer to Africa, and also the U.S. coming closer to Africa. I think the U.S. and Brazil, working together, could build some—carry out some projects that could have the meaning for poorer countries to be able to provide certainty that people would not see in richer countries, just exploiters, but to see richer countries in the world as something else.

And that is why the Doha round is important. That's why the WTO agreement is important. And I see that your negotiating minister is here, the USTR is here—my minister is here, and I think that we should give them one single order: Come to an agreement as soon as possible. Because if the U.S. and Brazil come to an understanding, it's easier for us to convince those who are still not participating in that agreement.

I want to thank you and say that this relation between Brazil and the U.S., which is a longstanding relation consecrated by decades of time, will continue to be strengthened to the extent that we respect each other, to the extent that each respects the sovereign political decision of each state, and to the extent that we are able to build together projects that can help other countries to pull themselves out of the situation of poverty they're in.

Thank you very much, President Bush, for your visit to Brazil.

**President Bush.** I was really looking forward to coming back and visiting with you because every time we have a conversation about mutual concerns and opportunities, it is a constructive and positive dialog.

I respect President Lula. Obviously the people of Brazil respect him. After all, you won by a landslide election, and I congratulate you for your election, yet was not—had not been back to your country since the elections. I think it's great to be able to say a good friend won reelection because it confirms the fact that democracy is alive and well in Brazil. And Brazil serves as such a great example for other democracies about what is possible and what's important.

Thanks very much for the trip to the biofuels plant today. I think it's interesting, as I said there at the plant, that we spent a lot of time and a lot of conversations on how we can work together to promote alternative sources of energy. It's in the interests of the United States that we promote alternative sources of energy. And Brazil has showed what's possible.

And so, Mr. President, I appreciate very much your leadership on this issue. I talked to my country about the need to reduce our gasoline usage by 20 percent over 10 years, that we will have 35 billion gallons of alternative fuels by the year 2017. I think it's an achievable goal. You have shown what is possible. I look forward to sharing research between our countries. I look forward to continuing to explore opportunities.

I share your concerns about the people in democracy not receiving the benefits of democracy. I think you're very wise to recognize that democracy is only as strong as the people feel that the society benefits them. Part of the message on my trip to South America—and eventually Guatemala as well as Mexico—is to say that the American people care deeply about social justice, that we believe in education and health, that we believe in supporting programs that help lift people out of their current conditions, and we want to help.

Thank you very much for our strong discussion on trade. It turns out America and Brazil have—are in the center of the WTO debate; that if we're despondent on the trade talks, a lot of the world will be despondent on the trade talks; that if we're unable to work together on the WTO talks, the world can't work together on the WTO talks. And that's why our conversation was vital, because success of the Doha round for the WTO is necessary for a lot of reasons, not the least of which is—the most effective antipoverty program is trade.

And so I commit to you the same thing that you have just committed, and that is, we will work together. We will lock our trade ministers in a room—*[laughter]*—all aimed at advancing this important round.

I share your optimism about what can get done, and it's going to take a lot of work. I caution other countries, though, that if the

United States and Brazil agree, that does not let them off the hook in terms of making the concessions necessary so that everybody is a winner in these trade negotiations.

One thing that I strongly believe in is that I think America needs to be more open to students coming to our country. And I talk to Secretary Rice about that a lot, and I hope a lot of Brazilian students are coming to the United States of America. I hope—I think you'll find it to be a fantastic opportunity to study and learn. And it's in our interests that we have people come and see what we're like, to have people come and see the compassion of the American people.

We talked about foreign policy in our discussions. We spent time on Central America, and one of the messages we will send to our Central American friends is that one way to help develop your countries is for you to adopt ethanol and biodiesel industries.

We talked about Haiti, and I congratulate the President for his strong leadership in accepting the responsibilities for helping Haiti. Brazil has been a strong leader in helping provide stabilization and providing troops. I know it's a strain, Mr. President, but you made a tough choice, and it's a humanitarian choice, and it's a decent choice, and the people of Brazil ought to be proud of your leadership on this important issue.

We talked about Africa. The President shares deep concerns about Africa, as do I. We talked about how we can work together on specific projects aimed at helping people. And so our foreign ministries will talk about specific programs—a Brazilian-American joint venture to help eliminate poverty and lift people's lives up.

I thank you for your leadership. People don't understand this, probably, but I spent a lot of time on world affairs, and the President of this country is highly respected around the world. People listen to him. He speaks clearly, but he speaks with a set of values that are noble.

And so, Mr. President, I'm so glad you're here—I mean, so glad I am here. I'm looking forward to welcoming you to the United States later on this month at Camp David, to be able to continue our dialog and our discussion about how we can work together for the common good.

Thank you.

**President Lula da Silva.** Thank you very much. As we agreed earlier, we will have two questions from Brazilian journalists and two from U.S. journalists. I'll open the floor for the first question from—[inaudible]—from the Brazilian Television Record Station.

### Trade

**Q.** How could we believe that these possibilities, these commitments that you're taking on to negotiate opening up for the Doha round will be possible, since you have a very recent experience in negotiating FTAA, which did not work out? So what's the difference now in trade negotiations? Will you be trying to speak the same language, despite the difference between Portuguese and English, but try to speak the same language to the rest of the world that these two countries are willing to negotiate? Why is this negotiation at this time different? And perhaps your meeting in Washington will be another chance to set a deadline for the negotiations. Maybe by the end of this month, you can have a commitment.

**President Bush.** First, I think deadlines are a little dangerous when two countries set them, and we're dealing with a lot of other countries. Remember, we can agree, but if other major trading partners don't agree, then all of a sudden, we have set ourselves up for failure. I'm an optimist that we can get it done. Therefore, I think we need to be careful about creating the conditions that will—for the world to say, "Oh look, they failed."

Since we discussed the FTAA—and the United States has entered into a series of agreements, as have Brazil—in other words, there's a lot of bilateral and regional trade agreements going on. And so, just because we had difficulty getting the FTAA done should not discourage one from trying to do something globally. I mean, after all, there's been a lot of successes on the trade front, just not on that particular trade front.

And no question it was hard on the FTAA, and no question it's going to be hard on Doha. But the thing that's important about Doha is that it is—it really is an opportunity to—for the world to get together to help

eradicate world poverty. And there's a compelling reason to keep trying.

And so I'm not the least bit discouraged by past failures, nor am I overly optimistic because we've had a lot of successes in trade agreements. I am realistic in knowing that it's hard work, but it's going to require the leadership of Brazil and the United States to stay at it and work hard and see if we can't reach a positive agreement.

**President Lula da Silva.** Well, my dear friend, Celso, first of all, to achieve an agreement between nations is not a simple thing to do. The complexity of economic problems, as well as political and social problems involved in final decisions may have extraordinary or disastrous results. I think that we have talked a lot about the Doha round in recent months, and I think that we are moving. We're moving on solid ground to find a chance for the so-called "G-point" to come to an agreement. I am convinced of the willingness, as President Bush said, if Brazil and the U.S. find—both find a point of equilibrium where we can make offers to other countries—because the U.S. had an advantage in this negotiation. There's a lot of people that depend on the negotiations from the U.S., but they negotiate in their own name. We, in Brazil, have to negotiate together with the G-20. And the European Union is a group of countries. So you can see that we, in addition to convincing the richer partners, we also have to convince our poorer partners to accept an agreement.

And we accept that challenge; we take it on. We're taking on that challenge because at this point, the success of negotiations is no longer just economic in nature. It's not just a matter of who is going to win or lose economically; the problem now is eminently political. The problem now is whether, as world leaders, we will be competent or not to decide, for better or worse, on the future of millions of human beings that depend on this agreement. I'm convinced that we'll get there.

Second, we cannot compare what we're negotiating now in the Doha round with conversations on FTAA. Of course, you covered my 2002 campaign, and you saw how many speeches I made against the FTAA, back in 2002 when I was first elected. Me and almost

all the Presidential candidates running for office in South America were against it, because we believed in the strengthening of MERCOSUR. And we achieved that. We believed, first of all, in strengthening the integration of South America as a first priority. And today, Brazil's largest share of trade is with the rest of Latin America.

This is a demonstration that we took major steps, and that does not mean that we cannot discuss as many bilateral agreements as possible between Brazil and the U.S., other countries—U.S. and other countries with Brazil. Concretely, when you're negotiating, the numbers get built, and no country wants to be the first one to make an offer. It's just like playing cards; every card you put on the table is spent; you can't take it back. And nobody wants to make the first offer.

Of course, President Bush has his offer up his sleeve; Brazil has one in its vest pocket; the European Union has one stuck someplace. And others don't want to even play. But I'm certain that he and I do have our cards ready, because we want to play. So at some point, we're going to put our cards on the table, and we're going to see whether we'll be capable or not of coming to an agreement.

I want to say that I am convinced that we can make an agreement. It certainly will not be everything that we could do, but will do enough to continue encouraging the rest of the world, especially the poorest countries, that they will have a chance in the 21st century that they did not have in the 20th century.

### ***Central and South America-U.S. Relations***

**Q.** Mr. President Bush, Hugo Chavez of Venezuela has been using his country's vast oil wealth to court a whole new generation of Latin Americans. You pretty much avoided using his name. He certainly used yours a lot, including saying earlier today, "Go home, gringo." Do you think a visit to Latin America and agreements like the one you forged today will help counter his influence or just give him more ammunition?

And to President Lula da Silva, were you able to persuade President Bush to help you

on getting our Congress to lower the sugar ethanol tariffs?

**President Bush.** I'll answer that one for him; he can answer it too. It's not going to happen. The law doesn't end until 2009; then the Congress will accept it—will look at it when the law ends.

You may want to expand on that answer.

As to my trip, I bring the good will of the United States to South America and Central America. That's why I'm here. I don't think America gets enough credit for trying to help improve people's lives. And so my trip is to explain, as clearly as I can, that our Nation is generous and compassionate; that when we see poverty, we care; that when we see illiteracy, we want to do something about it; that when we find there to be a deficiency in health care, we'll help to the extent we can.

I'm sure most people here in South America don't understand the United States has doubled our bilateral aid to countries in Central and South America since I've been the President. It's gone from 800 [\$800 million] \* to 1.6 billion last year. And I say that not to just brag about dollars, but it's a starting point for people to understand this Nation is committed to this prospect. A prosperous neighborhood is in the interest of the United States; a peaceful neighborhood is in our interests.

And so we fully understand that if there's illiteracy, it will affect our country eventually. Plus, the American people have got a great compassion for human rights and human dignity. I'm going to go see some programs here after this press conference, all aimed at lifting the lives of citizens, all aimed at focusing on individuals and how best can they be helped.

There is a lot of investment in the region, as the President noted. Oh, for some, that's just a fancy word, but for others who benefit from the investment through jobs, it's a central part of their life. And so my trip down here is to remind our country that South America and Latin America are good places to invest, particularly in countries that adhere to rule of law and are transparent and believe in the fundamentals of freedom.

And so I'm reminding people that which is pretty evident, that a lot of people know

\* White House correction.

that there are direct ties between our countries. There's a lot of remittances from the United States back to the region. Why? Because there are people working for a living in our country that are sending money home to support their families. So this trip is to remind people of the ties that bind us and the importance of this region for the future of the United States. And I'm real glad to be here, and I appreciate the hospitality.

Get another question moving.

### **U.S. Foreign Policy/Trade**

**Q.** [*Inaudible*] My question is for President Bush, is whether you agree that in recent years, the U.S. really had its back turned to Latin America? And if so, what could be done to make up for the losses in the past, in the last 2 years of your Presidency?

And to ask President Lula, as well, yesterday, you criticized U.S. subsidies as nefarious. So if you really decided to put the two ministers in a room to have an agreement, did you receive any signals that it's possible to reduce domestic subsidies in the U.S. to their farmers?

**President Bush.** Well, I strongly disagree with your description of U.S. foreign policy. That may be what people say, but it's certainly not what the facts bear out. I just told you that our bilateral aid package has doubled.

Again, I fully recognize that money alone is not a sign of compassion or care, but it's money aimed at helping people improve their lives. It's social justice money. Most of the bilateral aid money that we spend goes to education programs, health programs.

I'm going to—when I go to Guatemala, I'm going to go to a—I'm going to go outside the capital and see our military building health clinics. The USS *Comfort* is coming to the region to provide care for thousands of people who need health care. We train teachers; we train doctors; we train nurses. And so the characterization that our back has been turned is just—it's not borne out by the facts. It may be a perception, but the facts certainly dispel that.

And that's why I've come. I've been in your great country twice in a very quick period of time, all aiming at sending the message that we care about our neighborhood a lot.

And relations between our Governments are strong; we have an open relationship; the dialog is friendly. There's not 100-percent agreement on issues, but nevertheless, issues are brought to the table in a constructive manner. And it's amazing what you can do when it comes to solving problems, if there's a feeling of mutual respect and a priority.

It's easy to kind of dismiss the United States foreign policy in the region, but think about this: There are millions of people living in our country from the region. The United States is a multicultural society. We've got people from all over South and Central America living in the United States—many there legally, many there illegally, which, by the way, argues for a comprehensive immigration reform plan that teaches people with respect and dignity. It's one of the big issues that I put forth to our Congress, to get a comprehensive immigration plan done.

I appreciate your question, and I'm glad to be down here to be able to answer it.

**President Lula da Silva.** In terms of the question from the U.S. journalist, he asked whether I was capable of convincing President Bush to get the tariffs reduced. If I were able to—if I had that capacity for persuasion that you think I might have, who knows, I might have convinced President Bush to do so many other things that I couldn't even mention here. [*Laughter*]

This is a process. There's no difference between—in negotiating processes like this and normal negotiations between human beings. There's a time you look a person in the face and say, "I don't like that guy." And a few months later, they might be your best friend, and you were wrong when you said that you didn't like them. So I don't think that a country will give up on the things that protect their trade because someone else is asking. It's a process of convincing that has to take place, a lot of talking. And the day will come when that conversation will mature, and then we can find a common denominator that will allow us to come to an agreement.

In terms of the journalist from the O Globo newspaper, your question, today we have a problem of what's at stake. I learned from my Minister Celso Amorim that if we draw a triangle, we could show you what the difficulties are in the negotiations we

have. What do countries want from the European Union? They want it to facilitate access to their agricultural market for poorer countries to export to them, including the U.S. wants to export to them.

What do we want from the U.S.? We want them to reduce subsidies that they pay in their domestic market. And what does the U.S. and the European Union—what do they want from us Brazilians and other countries in the G-20? That we have greater flexibility and access to markets for industrial products and services. That's what's at stake. That's what's in the game.

If we are intelligent enough and competent enough to pull out of our vest pockets the numbers that are still held secret, as top state secrets, then we will find a common ground. Don't ask me what the number is. If I knew, I wouldn't tell you, because if I knew, then I'd establish a paradigm, and he'd say that I should back off a little bit. So that's why these numbers are held back, though, as a soccer player, when they're going to kick a penalty goal, they never say which corner they're going to try to kick into. But things are happening. They're underway. Of course there's pessimists about everything in the world. That's no problem.

And the third thing I would like to say to President Bush, if you'd allow me to say one thing, over time I have become more and more convinced—and I've said this to my colleagues in CARICOM and Central America; I've said this to countries in Africa—that we actually do not need to be discussing aid to those countries. What we need to discuss is something that's even more important than aid. We need to build projects together, projects that mean development, and that after some time, we can see the concrete results of the money that's been invested. Because in some countries over the years, aid money doesn't always lead to concrete results because you don't control how it's spent that well.

I'm convinced that in the biofuel programs, if we are mature enough and have the political understanding and can carry out joint projects with other countries with the U.S., involving South Africa, China, India, European countries, and if we fund projects to produce biodiesel and ethanol in poorer

countries, and then the richer countries buy biodiesel that's produced there, then we'll see that investments put into those countries have produced results and, even more important, generated jobs. Because nothing gives more citizenry to a man or a woman than to know that they have a job, and to take some money home at the end of the month.

I think that's what we could do, and I said to President Bush, we could do that for Central America. We could build development projects for poorer countries. Then after 5, 10 years, we'll be able to see that something was done there that's generating wealth. That, in my opinion, is the real way, the major way that richer countries can aid poorer countries.

### *Iraq*

**Q.** Mr. President, the Iraqis hold their regional conference tomorrow. What are your expectations for it? And are you now willing to talk directly with Iran and Syria at this meeting?

**President Bush.** The expectations are that nations in the neighborhood, plus nations of the world, recognize that democracy can lead to peace, and that when 12 million people vote to live in a free society, it's in all our interests to help them realize the blessings of a free society. That's the expectations—in other words, a commitment to helping this young democracy survive and thrive.

Our message to the Syrians and Iranians won't change at that meeting that I've stated publicly, which is, we expect you to help this young democracy. And we will defend ourselves and the people in Iraq from the—from weapons being shipped in to cause harm; that we will protect ourselves and help the Iraqi people protect themselves against those who would murder the innocent to achieve political objectives.

And it's a positive meeting, Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters], particularly for Prime Minister Maliki and his Government, in that countries will now be coming to a rather formal meeting to express support. And it's positive because I think it's going to be important for the Iraqi people who have been suffering a lot to hear from other countries in the world that say, "We embrace your courage; we embrace your willingness to take risk for



freedom.” And we’ll see how it goes, but I’m happy to have supported the Prime Minister’s request that this meeting take place.

Mr. President, thanks. Your press conferences are nice. I appreciate the Brazilian press for coming. Glad the American press behaved okay. *[Laughter]* Be careful, they may spend a lot of time at the bars around here. *[Laughter]* Yes.

Okay, thanks.

NOTE: The President’s news conference began at 3:27 p.m. at the Hilton Sao Paulo Morumbi. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq. President Lula da Silva referred to Ambassador Susan C. Schwab, U.S. Trade Representative. President Lula da Silva spoke in Portuguese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President’s public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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#### **March 3**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Enterprise, AL, where he took an aerial tour of the area damaged by tornadoes on March 1. Later, he met with families whose homes were damaged by the tornadoes.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Americus, GA, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he took an aerial tour of the damaged area. He then participated in a briefing on tornado damage and met with affected families.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Alabama and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on March 1.

The President declared a major disaster in Georgia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on March 1–2.

#### **March 5**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President met with Foreign Service officers.

#### **March 6**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President watched the verdict read in the trial of former Chief of Staff to the Vice President I. Lewis Libby.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush had dinner with King Abdallah II and Queen Rania of Jordan.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph Timothy Kelliher to be a member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and to redesignate him as Chairman.

The President announced his intention to designate Kerri Layne Briggs as Acting Assistant Secretary of Education for Elementary and Secondary Education and to nominate her to be Assistant Secretary of Education for Elementary and Secondary Education.

The President announced his intention to nominate Douglas G. Myers, Jeffrey Patchen, and Lotsee Patterson to be members of the National Museum and Library Sciences Board.

#### **March 7**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush went to DAR Constitution Hall, where he made remarks to political appointees and Federal Government employees. Later, they returned to the White House.

Later in the afternoon, in the Cabinet Room, the President met with congressional leaders.